



U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
Newark Field Office - Region II
One Newark Center, 13th Floor
Newark, NJ 07102-5260
Telephone: (973) 622-7900

October 19, 2004

Lorraine Lavender
1060 Broad Street, #445
Newark, NJ 07102

Dear Ms. Lavender:

SUBJECT: Correspondence of October 15, 2004

In response to your letter of October 15, 2004, let me begin by addressing your allegations that you were dismissed in a very hostile manner when you visited my office. First of all, you accompanied Virginia Jones who was a resident of Brick Towers and wanted to discuss issues at her residence. Ms. Jones did not have an appointment with me, but I made myself available to her to address her concerns. After I finished my discussion with Ms. Jones, you proceeded to tell me about the "problems" at 1060 Broad Street. You also did not have an appointment and had no evidence of the issues you were raising. I do remember that I told you to call the Project Manager in my office, Ms. Shirley Cole, who is responsible for Essex Plaza.

Regarding Frank Hutchins, of the Newark HUD Tenant Coalition, please be advised that I have an open dialogue with Frank. If he has any problems with HUD buildings, he calls me immediately to address the issues. At the present time, I have no open issues with Frank, or with his organization.

Finally, regarding your issues at Essex Plaza. There are 450 units at Essex Plaza and the only complaints that I ever receive are from you and one other person who resides there. I have visited Essex Plaza on several occasions and consider it one of the premier projects in the City of Newark. The HUD inspections also confirm my observations. My suggestion for a meeting was to address your concerns regarding Essex Plaza, not for "deplorable conditions" that exist throughout "other HUD financed complexes" in the City of Newark. Therefore, I will not set an agenda. In addition, if you would like to meet with someone regarding the conditions at Essex Plaza, I suggest you contact Mr. Francis Thomas, at the New Jersey Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency (NJHMFA) in Trenton, NJ. NJHMFA is the Performance Based Contract Administrator that addresses tenant complaints on behalf of HUD in the State of New Jersey. Mr Thomas can be reached at (609) 278-7400.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Walter Kreher".

Walter Kreher
Director
Multifamily Program Center

Cc: Mr. Francis Thomas, NJHMFA
Mr. Frank Hutchins, Newark HUD Tenants Coalition

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